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SOURCE Newspaper and periodical as indicated.

USSR ARCTIC MILITARY OPERATIONS REPORTED

The USSR has for many years shown considerable interest in the exploration and settlement of its arctic territories. In recent years, Soviet newspaper and periodical articles have revealed the extensive character of the attempt to master the Arctic, but data has been limited, for the most part, to increases in capital investments, technical innovations, plans and methods, and records of individual expeditions. Outstanding results have been achieved, for example, in the investigation of ice conditions from the air. Also, many arctic observation stations have been built in recent years.

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Several anti-Soviet publications in the past year carried reports on the activities of a Soviet arctic army and preparations for a possible polar war. The reliability of these reports is questionable, and although they emanate from such widely separated places as Italy, Sweden, and Belgium; it is entirely possible that they all originate from the same source and should not be considered as separate reports confirming each other. The Stockholm daily Svenska Dagbladet on 30 January 1950 quoted the Russian emigre periodical Chasovoy, published in Paris, to the effect that the USSR had been conducting extensive experiments in arctic warfare for several years [redacted]. The articles presented below are probably from the same basic source.

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The first of these articles, "The USSR's 'Operation Arctic,'" appeared on 12 August 1950 in Il Messaggero Veneto, an Italian newspaper published in Udine and widely distributed in the Free Territory of Trieste. The article carried a Stockholm dateline and was signed by Erik Knutson. The numerous misspelled and confused geographical locations make the reliability of the document rather dubious.

The second article, which antedates the first and contains much of the same information, was published in Stockholm in the periodical, Obs! No 5, 1 March 1950. It is also similar to the 30 January 1950 story in Svenska Dagbladet mentioned above. A third article, which appeared in a Ukrainian anti-Soviet information bulletin, La Voix de l'Ukraine, No 5, 15 February 1950, published in Malines, Belgium, is not included here since it is identical with the Obs! article.

Inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the original have been retained in the English to help the analyst evaluate the sources and information.

USSR'S "OPERATION ARCTIC" -- Udine, Il Messaggero Veneto, 12 Aug 50

Reports appeared in the world press after the outbreak of the Korean war regarding US defense measures in the far northern regions, meeting place of the two giant world powers. These reports described new American bases in Alaska, the dispatching of troops to Fairbanks, and the calling up of Canadian troops.

The general feeling was that all of these steps in the Arctic, a region which is frozen and blocked from contact with the rest of the world for many months of the year, were truly excessive. Now, however, with the first information available on the USSR's plans in the Arctic, it would appear that US defense measures are highly inadequate.

A group of German prisoners of war who escaped to Scandinavia via Finland brought news of extreme importance concerning Soviet preparations in Siberia, and more precisely in those Far Northern areas located strategically between Asia and America. According to these prisoners, who were put to work in labor camps, Marshal Vasilevskiy, War Minister USSR, submitted to Stalin and the Politburo a detailed strategic plan of operations for attacking Alaska in event of war. The plan was opposed initially, but later, as a result of the unconditional support of Vasilii Stalin, the Marshal's son, it was approved.

The first labor brigades were sent to Northern Siberia in May 1950. These were composed chiefly of prisoners of war, who built the large barracks to quarter the army of carpenters, smiths, mechanics, and construction workers which was to install the communications facilities and build the military bases and airports provided for by Marshal Vasilevskiy's "Operation Arctic." The Soviet press has carried a large number of advertisements during the past few years appealing to these and other categories of workers to apply for jobs in the Far North.

The escaped prisoners reported that it will take at least 3 years to complete the project. There has been, however, a considerable speed-up during the last few months as a result of the arrival of new labor brigades made up of prisoners of war and political prisoners.

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It was reported that 5,300 kilometers of railroad have already been completed. The main line runs from Omekonski [probably Oymyakon, a village 800 kilometers east of Yakutsk], an industrial center located in the well-known "Yakutia Rectangle," where the Russians built a powerful combine of war plants, and reaches the Tchukoy [Chukot] Peninsula and Bering Strait. The railroad runs 2,000 kilometers along the Kolyma and Anadyr' mountains. At about 65 degrees north latitude, there is a branch line to the Bay of Korf at the northeast of the Kamchatka Peninsula, where a large military base is under construction. This base, it is said, is to become the main springboard for an attack against the Aleutian Islands. [The Official Passenger Transportation Schedule for Summer 1950, published by the Ministry of Transportation USSR, gives no evidence of any railroad lines in this area.]

The main line railroad is reported to run north to the Matachingoy Mountains, where it divides into two separate lines, one of which goes to the strategic base of Marunskoye [possibly Novo-Mariinsk, former name of Anadyr'] and the other to the military post of Vankaremskiy. Pitlecai [possibly Val'karayskiy], the last Soviet Army base before the Bering Strait, can be reached only by road.

In addition to this immense railroad network, 17,000 kilometers of roads have been resurfaced. Five airports are being built; two of these are completed. Three of the five airports are in the area between Yeropol'skiy, Markovo, and Anadyr'; the other two are on the Kamchatka Peninsula. An unspecified number of barracks, dumps, and radar stations have been completed.

The escaped prisoners estimated that a total of 170,000 forced laborers were employed there in the last 2 years. About 2,500 [sic] kilometers of tunnels have been dug through the mountains. Military engineers and local population were the chief labor force for the construction of the dumps and military bases.

On the basis of the above information, it can be deduced that Marshal Vasilevskiy's plan provides for a northward expansion of the industry of the "Yakutia Rectangle" so as to permit the creation of ground, sea, and air forces which would be completely independent of the rest of the USSR logistically as well as strategically.

After the communications network, dumps, and bases had been set up and activated, the next task was to train the military units of this special Arctic Army. In 1951, Vasilevskiy may have the necessary military forces to invade the American continent from the Far North.

Will Stalin and the Politburo give Vasilevskiy the green light? This question interests the entire world and particularly those who are responsible for the military defense of Western civilization.

This information supplied by the escaped prisoners of war is not the result of a sick imagination. The reports deserve consideration in view of the number of details in them and in view of the fact that the information of these prisoners who escaped at different times tends to substantiate their individual accounts.

THE POLAR WAR -- Stockholm, Obs!, 1 Mar 50

The Soviet General Staff began in 1946 to prepare for large-scale operations in the Arctic. Two years later, three subdivided polar armies totaling 25 divisions at T/O strength had been formed. The Western Polar Army, with headquarters at Murmansk, is to attack Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Greenland. It comprises eight divisions. The Siberian Polar Army, with headquarters at

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Igarka on the lower Yenisey River, is of the same strength and is held in readiness for an airborne invasion of northern Canada. The Third Far Eastern Army, with nine divisions, would have as its mission the occupation of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. Its headquarters is Magadan.

A first-class military highway from Magadan through the Kolyma area and out onto the Chukot Peninsula has been built by deportees. The port of Petropavlovsk on the southeastern coast of Kamchatka is an important base.

Installations for launching radio-guided V-5 and V-6 rockets with a range of up to 3,000 English miles are being constructed at a rapid pace on the Chukot Peninsula. Several American industrial centers thus lie within range. There are also submarine pens on the cliff coast of the peninsula.

The Soviet Arctic maneuvers, like those of the US, have been unsuccessful. Several polar divisions were sent to the Far North in fall 1948, but the results were catastrophic: 50 percent casualties from death, blindness, and freezing. Last year, it was decided that only small detachments were to spend the winter there.

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